

STAFF REPORT
August 21, 2008

No. 08PD036 - Major Amendment to a Planned Commercial Development

ITEM 47

GENERAL INFORMATION:

APPLICANT/AGENT	Dream Design International, Inc.
PROPERTY OWNER	Furniture Row USA, LLC
REQUEST	No. 08PD036 - Major Amendment to a Planned Commercial Development
EXISTING LEGAL DESCRIPTION	Lot 1 of Block 1 of Rushmore Crossing, Section 30, T2N, R8E, BHM, Rapid City, Pennington County, South Dakota
PARCEL ACREAGE	Approximately 5.05 acres
LOCATION	924 Eglin Street
EXISTING ZONING	General Commercial District - Planned Commercial Development
SURROUNDING ZONING	
North:	General Commercial District
South:	General Commercial Distinct
East:	General Commercial Distinct
West:	General Commercial District
PUBLIC UTILITIES	City sewer and water
DATE OF APPLICATION	7/11/2008
REVIEWED BY	Vicki L. Fisher / Ted Johnson

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Major Amendment to a Planned Commercial Development be denied.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

(Update, August 8, 2008. All revised and/or added text is shown in bold print.) This item was continued at the August 7, 2008 Planning Commission meeting at the applicant's request. Please note that no other part of this Staff Report has been revised.

The applicant has submitted a Major Amendment to a Commercial Development Plan to revise the previously approved sign package and the previously approved landscape plan. In particular, the applicant is proposing to add a 20 foot wide by 30 foot high pylon sign with a 7 foot 6 inch by 16 foot reader board incorporated into the center of the sign on the

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northern portion of the property, adjacent to Interstate 90. In addition, the applicant is proposing to remove eight Ponderosa Pine trees along the north lot line of the property as it abuts Interstate 90, to add one Ponderosa Pine tree in the northeast corner of the property and to add one Summit Ash tree in a landscape island located along the north side of the existing structure.

On August 9, 2007, the Planning Commission approved an Initial and Final Commercial Development Plan (File #07PD049) to allow a 52,732 square foot commercial building to be constructed on the subject property. The applicant has indicated that the commercial building will contain "Furniture Row" with individual tenants of "Sofa Mart", "Denver Mattress", "Oak Express" and "Bedroom Expressions".

The property is located approximately 300 feet east of the intersection of Luna Avenue and Eglin Street on the north side of Eglin Street. The Furniture Row building is currently constructed on the property.

STAFF REVIEW:

Staff has reviewed the Major Amendment to the Commercial Development Plan and has noted the following considerations:

Signage: The previously approved sign package allows the following signage:

1. A four foot wide by 28.75 foot high ground sign consisting of stacked chairs and a connecting 7 foot wide by 30 foot high ground sign designed on a single base to be located in the northwest corner of the property;
2. A 41 inch by 25 foot 2 inch wall sign and two 5 foot by 9 foot wall signs for "Oak Express";
3. A 70.5 inch by 22 foot wall sign for "Bedroom Expressions";
4. A 3 foot by 26 foot wall sign for Denver Mattress;
5. A 9 foot 6 inch by 15 foot 10 inch wall sign for "Sofa Mart Designer Rooms"; and,
6. Two 4 foot by 35 foot wall signs advertising "Furniture Row" located at either end of the structure.

As previously indicated, the applicant is now proposing to construct a 20 foot wide by 30 foot high pylon sign with a 7 foot 6 inch by 16 foot electronic reader board incorporated into the center of the sign. The applicant has indicated that the sign will be constructed with an aluminum face and painted terracotta in color. This sign is in addition to the previously approved signage as identified above.

The site plan shows the proposed sign within the northern portion of the lot adjacent to Interstate 90. The South Dakota Department of Transportation has reviewed the request and noted that a 30 foot high pylon sign with an electronic reader board located adjacent to Interstate 90 would create traffic issues. In particular, it was noted that this is a heavily traveled section of Interstate 90 with a ramp merge in the immediate area of the sign. The diversion created by a reader board sign would compromise safe travel standards within this section of the Interstate. In addition, there is sufficient signage currently allowed on the

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property as per the previously approved sign package.

Allowing a 30 foot high pylon sign with a reader board would not be consistent with the high quality of development that has previously been approved and/or proposed along this section of Interstate 90 which serves as a gateway into our community. Please note that the Rushmore Mall recently removed their reader board sign from their property which improved their overall signage on the site.

Staff is recommending that the revised sign package to allow the proposed sign as identified be denied.

Landscaping: During the review and approval of the original Commercial Development Plan, the South Dakota Department of Transportation stipulated that screening and landscaping be provided along Interstate 90 to buffer the glare of headlights and parking lot lighting from Interstate 90 in order to ensure that the use would not adversely impact traffic along the Interstate highway. As such, the approved landscaping plan provided a row of Ponderosa Pine trees along the north lot line of the property between the parking lot and Interstate 90. The applicant is proposing to remove eight Ponderosa Pine trees along the north lot line of the property as it abuts Interstate 90, to add one Ponderosa Pine tree in the northeast corner of the property and to add one Summit Ash tree in a landscape island located along the north side of the existing structure. Removing the trees as proposed will allow the proposed sign to clearly be seen from the Interstate but it will also eliminate the buffer between the parking lot and the traffic along the Interstate as stipulated by the South Dakota Department of Transportation. Relocating the two trees as proposed does not create any additional buffering between the property and the Interstate.

The South Dakota Department of Transportation has reviewed the request and noted that revising the landscape plan as proposed is no longer in compliance with the requirement to provide a buffer between the parking lot and the traffic along Interstate 90. In addition, the adopted Future Land Use Plan for this area requires that a landscape buffer be provided along Interstate 90. Removing the landscaping as proposed is not in compliance with the adopted plan. As such, eliminating the landscape buffer as proposed will require a Major Amendment to the Future Land Use Plan.

Staff is recommending that the Major Amendment to the Commercial Development Plan to revise the landscape plan as proposed be denied.

Notification Requirement: The receipts for the certified mailing requirement have been returned. Staff has not received any calls or inquires regarding this proposal.